IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions.

1. (Original) Method for amplification of a target RNA sequence comprising the following steps:

(a) annealing a first primer to the target RNA sequence, said first primer comprising a hybridizing sequence, which is complementary to and hybridizes to at least a first segment of the target RNA sequence, operatively associated with a promoter sequence;

(b) extending said first primer in a reaction catalyzed by a DNA polymerase, forming a first RNA/cDNA hybrid nucleic acid molecule;

(c) selectively removing the target RNA sequence of the first RNA/cDNA hybrid nucleic acid molecule forming a fist single stranded cDNA sequence;

(d) annealing a second primer to the obtained first single stranded cDNA sequence, said second primer comprising a hybridizing sequence which is complementary to and hybridizes to a first segment of the first single stranded cDNA sequence;

(e) extending said second primer in a reaction catalyzed by a DNA polymerase to form a first double stranded DNA molecule; and

(f) employing the first double stranded DNA molecule of step (e) in the preparation of a plurality of RNA transcripts that are complementary to the target RNA sequence in a reaction catalyzed by a DNA-dependent RNA polymerase with specificity for the promoter sequence comprised in the first primer;

wherein the first primer comprises a hybridizing sequence of 7 to 14 nucleotides, a transcription enhancing sequence, and an anchor which is capable of binding to a second segment of the target RNA sequence, and/or wherein the second primer comprises a hybridizing sequence of 7 to 14 nucleotides, an amplification enhancing sequence and an anchor which is capable of binding to a second segment of the first single stranded cDNA.

2. (Original) Method according to claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

(g) annealing the second primer to the RNA transcripts produced in step (f);

(h) extending the second primer in a reaction catalyzed by the DNA polymerase to form a second RNA/cDNA hybrid nucleic acid molecule;

(i) selectively removing the RNA of the second RNA/cDNA hybrid molecule to obtain a second single stranded cDNA molecule;

(j) annealing the first primer to the obtained second single stranded cDNA sequence;

(k) extending the 3' end of the second single stranded cDNA molecule in a reaction catalyzed by the DNA polymerase using the first primer as a template to form a second partly double stranded DNA molecule comprising a double stranded promotor site;

(l) employing the second double stranded DNA molecule of step (k) in the preparation of a plurality of RNA transcripts complementary to the target RNA sequence in a reaction catalyzed by the DNA-dependent RNA polymerase with specificity for the promotor sequence in the first primer.

3. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in~~of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the first primer comprises, going from the 5' end to the 3' end, an anchor, a transcription enhancing sequence, and a hybridizing sequence consisting of 7 to 14 nucleotides which are complementary to a first segment of the target RNA sequence of 7 to 14 contiguous nucleotides.

4. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in~~of claim 1 ~~or 2~~, wherein the second primer comprises ~~of~~, going from the 5' end to the 3' end, an anchor, an amplification enhancing sequence, and a hybridizing sequence consisting of 7 to 14 nucleotides which are complementary a~~t~~o the first segment of the first single stranded cDNA sequence of 7-14 contiguous nucleotides.

5. Currently amended) Method a~~s claimed in any of the claims 1-4~~of claim 1,

wherein the hybridizing sequence comprises 7-10 nucleotides which are complementary to a first segment of the target RNA sequences of 7 to 10 contiguous nucleotides.[[.]]

6. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-5~~of claim 1, wherein the anchor is an[[,]] optionally modified[[,]] oligonucleotide, comprising 7 to 22[[,]] optionally modified[[,]] nucleotides[[,]] which binds to the second segment of the target RNA sequence or to the second segment of the first single stranded cDNA molecule.

7. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in~~of claim 6, wherein the anchor is an[[,]] optionally modified[[,]] oligonucleotide, comprising 7 to 14, preferably 9-14, optionally modified nucleotides.

8. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in~~of claim 6 ~~or 7~~, wherein the anchor comprises DNA, RNA, 2'O-methyl modified nucleotides and/or LNA.

9. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-5~~of claim 1, wherein the anchor comprises PNA.

10. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-5~~of claim 1, wherein the anchor comprises a protein, or fragments derived thereof, which bind(s) to the second segment of the target RNA sequence or the second segment of the first single stranded cDNA molecule.

11. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in~~of claim 10, wherein the protein, or fragments derived thereof, are chosen from the group consisting of a RNA binding protein, a polyC-binding protein, a polyA-binding protein and a protein comprising a zinc-finger, a

restriction enzyme, and an antibody, or fragments thereof.

12. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-11~~of claim 1, wherein the second segment is separated from the first segment by 0 to 6 nucleotides, preferably by 0 to 4 nucleotides, more preferably by 0 to 3 nucleotides.

13. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-12~~of claim 1, wherein the transcription enhancing sequence reads:

5'-AAACGGGCACGAGC-3'.

14. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-13~~of claim 1, wherein the amplification enhancing sequence reads:

5'GACTTCAGGACTTCAGG-3'.

15. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the preceding claims 1 to 14~~of claim 1, wherein the promoter sequence is the bacteriophage T7 promoter sequence.

16. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the preceding claims 1 to 15~~of claim 1, wherein the DNA polymerase is the avian myeloblastosis virus (AMV) reverse transcriptase.

17. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-16~~of claim 1, wherein the target RNA sequence is a segment of the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

18. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the claims 1-17~~of claim 1, wherein the target nucleic acid is a segment of the human hepatitis C virus.

19. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in any of the preceding claims 1-18~~of claim 1, wherein the RNA transcripts are detected by one or more sequence-specific probes.

20. (Currently amended) Method ~~as claimed in~~of claim 19, wherein the sequence-specific probe hybridizes to a sequence identical to the amplification sequence of the second primer.

21. (Original) Primer comprising a hybridizing sequence, which is complementary to and hybridizes to a first segment of a target RNA sequence, and an anchor binding to a second segment of the target RNA sequence.

22. (Original) Primer, comprising, going from the 5' end to the 3' end, an anchor, a transcription enhancing sequence or an amplification enhancing sequence, and a hybridizing sequence of 7-14 nucleotides, preferably 7-10 nucleotides.

23. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in~~of claim 21~~ or 22~~, wherein the anchor is an[[,]] optionally modified[[,]] oligonucleotide, comprising 7 to 22[[,]] optionally modified[[,]] nucleotides, which bind to the second segment of the target RNA sequence or to the second segment of the first single stranded cDNA molecule.

24. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 23, wherein the anchor is an[[,]] optionally modified[[,]] oligonucleotide, comprising 7 to 14, preferably 9 to 14, optionally modified nucleotides.

25. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in~~of claim 21~~ or 22~~, wherein the anchor comprises DNA, RNA, 2'O-methyl modified nucleotides and/or LNA nucleotides.

26. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in~~of claim 21 ~~or 22~~, wherein the anchor comprises PNA.

27. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in~~of claim 21 ~~or 22~~, wherein the anchor comprises a protein, or fragments derived thereof, which are capable of specific binding to the second segment of the target RNA sequence or the second segment of the first single stranded cDNA sequence.

28. (Currently amended) Primer as claimed in claim ~~28~~27, wherein the protein, or fragments derived thereof, ~~are chosen~~is selected from the group consisting of an RNA binding protein, a polyC-binding protein, a polyA-binding protein and a protein comprising a zinc-finger, a restriction enzyme, and an antibody or fragments thereof.

29. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in any of the claims 21-29~~of claim 21, wherein the transcription enhancing sequence reads

5' AAACGGGCACGAGC-3'.

30. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in any of the claims 21-30~~of claim 21, wherein the amplification enhancing sequence reads

5'-GACTTCAGGACTTCAGG-3'.

31. (Currently amended) Primer ~~as claimed in any of the claims 21-31~~of claim 21, wherein the promoter sequence is the bacteriophage T7 promoter sequence.

32. (Currently amended) Kit for the amplification and/or detection of a target RNA sequence, comprising at least one or more primers as claimed in ~~claims 21-32~~claim 21.

33. (Currently amended) Kit ~~as claimed in~~of claim 33, further comprising one or more sequence-specific probes, an amplification buffer, and/or one or more enzymes.